

Admiral John Richardson, CNO
MCPON Steven S. Giordano
Facebook All Hands Call
30 August 2017

Admiral Richardson: Hello, Team. It's CNO Richardson here and I'm here with MCPON Giordano, and we're coming to you for the first time on Facebook Live as just another venue to try and reach out and connect. And boy, I'll tell you what, we have gotten a connection for sure. We put out a quick video to try and get some questions up front and we have been inundated with questions. Over 200 questions have come in, in preparation for this event. So we're going to try to get to as many as we can here, and what we don't get to on the broadcast, we'll make sure that we answer you directly via email.

So first and foremost as I start every one of my All Hands Calls with, and a lot of times we're doing these together, I want to start with just how proud I am of all the work that you do. We have 65,000 sailors deployed around the world. They are covering down on those important missions that we do to protect America and promote our interests around the world. You are doing fantastic work out there. So that's an important message to start off with.

Having said that, as you all know, we're going through some rough times right now, and we're going to get through that. We're going to address these problems. This type of broadcast where we can hear from you and you can hear from us is an important part of understanding how we're going to get at that. And when we get through it, we're going to be stronger and tougher on the other side.

MCPON, have you got anything you want to share with the team?

MCPON Giordano: Yes, sir. Just to kind of add on top of that getting through it, is having conversations about it. And this opportunity here, this live stream that people can continue to feed into and have those conversations, we're going to try to get to as many questions as possible. We can't get to them all, but we're going to try to get to as many as possible. So keeping that in mind, I'm ready to just get at this and start answering those questions that came from all of you.

Admiral Richardson: Okay. So the way we'll do it, we've got a lot of questions written down, and MCPON and I will just go back

and forth and we'll try and answer as many as we can. I'll start off.

This one comes from HM2 [Zwiefel] from the Naval Hospital in Pensacola. HM2 [Zwiefel] talks about the whole idea of this mindset of "doing more with less." With that mindset, the current trends seem to point to the fact that we're taking a pretty dangerous job, being done by a high reliability organization, and is this "do more with less" mindset eating into that? Is it making a tough job tougher; a dangerous job, more dangerous? So HM2 [Zwiefel] asks, what are we doing to improve these outcomes? Will there be more training where it matters? And she's concerned that it's not just afloat, but also ashore.

What a great question. And it's also kind of echoed by Petty Officer Kirk, Petty Officer [Tencrow], Petty Officer Williams, and Mr. Bolan.

Listen, I will tell you that one thing we have to do is really fight against this "do more with less" mindset. The thing that makes us a powerful Navy, a capable Navy, is that we have standards. Standards of performance, standards of safety, material readiness standards, those sorts of things. And when we perform, we must perform to those standards. And when we can't meet those standards, we've got to understand exactly what that means.

So I would encourage you to push back against this "do more with less." We want to make sure that we're properly resourced, whether that be money, whether that be fuel, whether that be parts, whether that be people. And we'll do exactly what we're resourced to, to the standards of performance that we've got.

If you let this "do more with less" mindset eat into our way of doing business, you start to see this kind of slow decline of readiness and it sneaks up on you. So you know what you need to do your job. We need to fight back against this idea that we can continue to do more of our mission with fewer resources. Keep these things in balance and understand where the differences lie.

Are we going to make adjustments in training? Almost certainly. We're constantly learning in the Navy, and we're constantly looking to do our business better. That includes training. So you can anticipate that we'll continue to learn and get better in the training department so that we can become more capable.

Anything to add to that?

MCPON Giordano: No, sir, but I think that segues right into the next question that we're going to talk about.

This comes from ET3 [Handigar], and there were some other folks that also had similar questions. Mr. Mark Jetty was one of them.

The question came in, and it talked about in the light of recent events that are going on in 7th Fleet and other parts of the Fleet operating around the globe, are there currently any efforts in action to combat the casualties we have been suffering? If so, is there anything that we at the more junior levels can do to help in these efforts?

And I've got to tell you, first of all, you know, shipmate, what a great mindset to have. You first look at these things and you own it and you go, what can we do?

The first thing I would say is you know, we talk about being a learning organization and that starts with each and every one of us. We have to learn every day. We continue to educate ourselves, we continue to hone our skills, we focus on those watch station qualifications, we mature our skill sets, we develop every day.

And the other piece of this that I think that everybody can do is, we're all leaders out there. In every part of our organization. And we need people to continuously be those leaders and identify those things that we can continue to improve upon, and challenge leadership with those things, and then kind of hold each other accountable to that stuff.

So great question that came in. There's a lot of things that we can do. Keep focused on maturing those skill sets out there, focusing on developing our competencies and our operations and warfighting effectiveness, and be leaders across the entire organization.

Admiral Richardson: And I would just add onto that. First of all, this idea of ownership is a real powerful one. We just need to own our jobs, be experts in what we do, hold ourselves to those standards, challenge our leadership to understand and to get better as well.

That's exactly the mindset behind this Operational Pause that we ordered. We're going to just stop for a second and we're going to make sure that we've got the fundamentals straight. Right? We're going to try to remove any kind of distractions from our day on that particular day and make sure that we do have ownership of our jobs, particularly in the sort of fundamental blocking and tackling, the elements of safety and the basics. You've heard that term, brilliant in the basics. This is the day to concentrate on those things to make sure that we're doing everything we can to be as brilliant in there as we can.

Okay. A follow-on question, and again, a nice segue. With the current status of ships in Japan, are there going to be any homeport shifts happening in the near future? And along those lines, what is the state of Navy manning, especially in our surface fleet where we see our ships being manned to their original manning size. And that's from Chief [Echevarri], also kind of echoed by Petty Officers [Standeway] and Overton.

Let me tell you how this works. We are constantly looking around the world and we compare it to our Navy to figure out what is the best place to homeport or forward deploy our ships? That will continue to be the case. It's very responsive to the strategic needs of the Navy and the nation. Where can we best exercise our mission? And that's a process called the Strategic Laydown Process that we'll continue to assess that environment and make changes as we go.

When we do those changes we owe it to you to make sure that the manning piece is there, that the maintenance capability is there so that when a ship moves from one homeport to the next it is fully supported from manning and infrastructure and a maintenance standpoint. So we'll get out in front of that as far as we can. We'll make sure that anybody who may be involved in a homeport shift is well informed, their families are taken care of, and we'll proceed from there.

But nothing out of the ordinary right now in terms of homeport shifts foreseen on the horizon, but we continue to assess, based on just changes in the strategic environment.

MCPON Giordano: We'll shift. We've got a great question that came in that kind of focused on a little bit of manning particular to the reserve community. Came in from STSCS Emory Rusty Brian. Appreciate you sending it over to us.

It says, can you speak to where your mind is with respect to reserve support and how we can help directly or indirectly during this time in need.

I'll tell you, we think about our Navy as one team, one total force.

Admiral Richardson: Absolutely.

MCPON Giordano: And the reserve community is embedded in all that. Around the globe, in a variety of different mission packages.

To answer the specifics to your question, you know, SURFOR and RESFOR, those teams are working hard, looking at opportunities for the reserve community to maybe fill some of those positions at sea, critical ratings, critical pay grades where they need leadership there. So those teams are working hard in that regard.

Also doing the same thing as we face all the challenges right now within the continental U.S. and the catastrophe in Houston, and where they're at with the joint base there, the joint reserve base there at Fort Worth. So reserve forces, you know, very much embedded in everything that we do.

Admiral Richardson: In fact when we do All Hands Calls, and sometimes there's a crowd of thousands, sometimes there's a couple of hundred. We always ask the question, hey, if you're a Navy reservist, raise your hand. We always get a fair amount of hands that go up in the team. That's the only way you can tell us apart. Right? I mean we truly are one team. We're working shoulder to shoulder.

And the reserves are also super responsive, so just like with Hurricane Harvey, they're up and at them, moving towards the sound of that gunfire down there, the problem, so that we can do everything we can to help the folks down in Texas.

I've got a different type of question here, and it's one that's near and dear to my heart so I'm really happy to answer. This comes from Chief Navy Diver Macomas. The essence of his question is about distractions and layering on requirements. So he phrases it, hey, sir, how come every time there's an accident in the Navy the solution seems to be some new or reinforced administrative procedure. And he lists a whole bunch of them. And it says hey, the biggest, he believes the biggest reason for

all our problems is that we may not be keeping our eye on becoming the professionals at our job that we need to be.

MCPON and I couldn't agree more that there's a lot of distractions out there, a lot of these administrative programs that don't contribute to the warfighting and operational excellence in our Navy. So we have been on a campaign to knock those down. We started with collateral duties. We took a bunch of those off the plate. MCPON stood up a team that is assessing even more. I think we're pretty close to announcing the second tranche of collateral duties that we'll eliminate.

If you see an administrative program out there that you don't think is contributing to warfighting excellence, operational excellence, you let your chain of command know and let me know. Just send it directly to us. We will take a close look at it, evaluate it, and if we can knock it out and eliminate it, we will. But we need to get back to owning our jobs, concentrating on the operational excellence piece of what our Navy's about, and reducing these administrative distractions that just pull us away from that. So great question.

We had a lot of people ask that. Chief Fisher, Lieutenant Bennett, Chief Griffin, and Mr. Snow as well. So lots of folks interested in how can we get back to the fundamental principles of warfighting excellence and remove these other distractions.

MCPON Giordano: I think that those distractions tie into this next question that we got. This question came from a number of parents out there. A number of moms, a number of dads, because they're paying attention. They're seeing what's happening out there. I just want to share this one with you that came into us from a mother. And Jamie, we appreciate you sending this over to us.

And as a father myself, it hits both of us hard. We're both parents as well.

Admiral Richardson: In fact I have a child in the Navy. So we understand exactly where you're coming from on this.

MCPON Giordano: Jamie wrote, my son, he's going to be enlisting very soon. He's excited about becoming a U.S. Navy sailor and serving the country with honor in the nuclear program. It's heartbreaking to hear that those in command have not provided adequate training or have been derelict in their duties, thereby costing others their lives. When my son enlists in a couple of

months I will give him over to the Navy. Both he and I will entrust his life to the wisdom of his commanding officers and the training he is provided. Going forward, how will you work to better ensure our sailors' safety? It is one thing to lose a son in battle. It's another completely to lose them in peacetime.

I will tell you that safety is in the forefront of everything that we think about. We drill, we educate, we train, consistent in every warfare community for the known and the unknown. And we do that so that our sailors out there know how to respond without even thinking about it sometimes. You know, you train to replicate, and that replication kicks in at those times when you need it the most. But we will always be focused on the safety of our sailors.

But we live in a tough environment. Being a U.S. Navy sailor is not necessarily for everybody. We're going to take care of our sons and daughters, our U.S. Navy sailors, but we're going to ask them to operate in some tough environments sometimes. But please know that we do, we, you know, we work hard every day to make sure they are effectively trained, educated, and conducting business out there in safe environments to respond to those situations, and we'll continue to invest in that regard.

Admiral Richardson: That's our first prime directive, if you will, to make sure that our training is preparing us properly to operate in these risky environments, to minimize that risk as much as possible.

As I said, you know, we're parents. My son's in the Navy. I know exactly what you're talking about. And we're going to, we are committed to continuing to train our sailors to operate safely, effectively, and to continue to learn. So we've got a commitment that we're going to cover down on that so that we're worthy of bringing your sons and daughters into the Navy and giving them a fulfilling career and a safe career. Okay?

I want to, I think we're coming to the end of our time and so I want to cover a couple of topics and then MCPON and I will just wrap up.

There is a bit of a thread out there, a thread of conversation, that there might be some kind of a cyber attack or cyber intrusion that is involved in these collisions. I'll tell you that we've given that an amazing amount of attention. It is sort of a reality of our current situation that part of any kind

of investigation or inspection is going to have to take a look at the computer, the cyber, the information warfare aspects of our business. We're doing that with these inspections as well. But to date, the inspections we've done show that there's no evidence of any kind of a cyber intrusion. We'll continue to look deeper and deeper, but I just want to assure you that to date, there's been nothing that we've found to point to that.

There's also a number of folks that are wondering hey, what about Hurricane Harvey? What are we doing down there as a Navy to get after that?

I'll tell you that we're involved. We've got two helicopter squadrons down there that are just working like crazy. The Dusty Dogs of HSC 7, and the Ghost Riders of HSC 28, and together those two teams have put together more than 220 rescues in the path and the wake of Hurricane Harvey, and they're continuing to work at it.

In addition, we have P8s from Jacksonville flying to provide overwatch and surveillance of the situation so that we can understand this crisis as it unfolds as best as possible. Those teams are from VP45.

And then we've got the USS Kearsarge and the USS Oak Hill, I think with the 2/6th MEU loading out today, and they are standing ready to get underway and go down there to provide continuing support and relief to the millions of people that have been affected by this just unbelievable record-setting storm of Hurricane Harvey.

So our hearts and minds are with everybody who's suffering by virtue of this hurricane. The Navy's flowing assistance to the crisis and we'll stay there as long as it takes to alleviate that suffering down there in Texas, and now moving over to Louisiana and other places.

Listen, we're going to close out because we're at the end of our time. Let us know how we did. Alright? It's our first time on Facebook Live. We're rookies at this, but it might be something that we do more often. Just to continue this conversation that the MCPON talked about, if this is effective in terms of getting the message to you, we can think about doing this more often.

I appreciate all of the questions that you sent in. We kind of grouped them together into some major topics. And as I said,

we'll get to all the ones we didn't answer by email or something like that.

Listen, keep on doing the great work that you're doing out there. Own your job. Be professionals. Know the requirements of your job. Be safe. Be brilliant in the basics. And we'll continue to be the strongest Navy on the water. Okay?

Let's get to it.

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